

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A microorganism-resistant humidifier, comprising:
 - a first reservoir having a predetermined water capacity;
 - a second reservoir;
 - a blower adapted to blow a stream of air through the humidifier and out to an ambient atmosphere, such that the stream of air picks up water vapor from water that may be in the second reservoir;
 - a valve adapted to feed a quickly-evaporable quantity of water from the first reservoir into the second reservoir, the quickly-evaporable quantity of water being substantially smaller than the water capacity of the first reservoir; and
 - a dry-out mechanism adapted to shut off the valve upon a user command and to continue to run the blower until the quickly-evaporable quantity of water has evaporated to an extent effective to inhibit the growth of microorganisms in the second reservoir.
2. The microorganism-resistant humidifier of claim 1 further comprising one or more wicks receiving water from said second reservoir.
3. The microorganism-resistant humidifier of claim 1 wherein said first reservoir is sealed and feeds water downward into said second reservoir.
4. The microorganism-resistant humidifier of claim 1 wherein said quickly-evaporable quantity of water is substantially evaporated within no more than one hour by said dry-out mechanism.
5. A microorganism-resistant humidifier comprising:
 - a first reservoir sealable from ambient;
 - a second reservoir communicating with the first reservoir and said ambient;

a blower for providing a stream of air through the humidifier and out to said ambient, such that the stream of air picks up water vapor from any water that may be in the second reservoir;

a valve for feeding a quickly-evaporable quantity of water from the first reservoir into the second reservoir, the quickly-evaporable quantity of water being substantially smaller than the water capacity of the first reservoir; and

a dry-out system for shutting off the valve upon a user command and continuing to run the blower at least until the quickly-evaporable quantity of water has evaporated to an extent effective in inhibiting the growth of microorganisms in the second reservoir.

6. The microorganism-resistant humidifier of claim 5 further comprising one or more wicks.
7. The microorganism-resistant humidifier of claim 5 wherein said first reservoir is sealed and feeds water downward into said second reservoir.
8. The microorganism-resistant humidifier of claim 5 wherein said quickly-evaporable quantity of water is substantially evaporated within no more than one hour by said dry-out mechanism.
9. The microorganism-resistant humidifier of claim 5, wherein said dry-out system comprises a timer for continuing running of the blower for a period of time after said user command.
10. The microorganism-resistant humidifier of claim 5, wherein water in said second reservoir seals said first reservoir from ambient.
11. A humidifier, comprising:
 - a first reservoir;
 - a valve for releasing water from said first reservoir into said humidifier;
 - a fan blowing air across said water and into ambient atmosphere; and
 - a user operated switch assembly adapted to operate said valve and said fan.

12. The humidifier of claim 11, further comprising a timer adapted to receiving a signal from said switch assembly.

13. The humidifier of claim 11, further comprising a timer connected to said switch assembly, said timer controlling operation of said fan after said switch assembly is positioned to deactivate said fan.

14. The humidifier of claim 13, wherein said timer maintains activation of said fan for a predetermined period of time after said switch is positioned to deactivate said fan.

15. The humidifier of claim 11, wherein said switch assembly mechanically operates said valve.

16. The humidifier of claim 11, wherein said switch assembly electrically operates said fan.